

## AUCKLAND NOTES.

# Bid By B.B.C. For Empire Listeners

Possibilities of Improved Service Discussed With Expert — Best Bands For Shortwave — Background of 1YX—Comedian's Good Impression—New Landmark.

RECENT cable reports from England indicate that the B.B.C. has set aside a large sum for the development of the Empire short-wave service. By the end of 1936 improved transmission and aerial design at Daventry will have effected a big improvement in the present service, which, for practical entertainment and news, is confined to the 25.5 metre service, which is received well in New Zealand.

According to an Auckland radio expert, this transmission is not yet of a commercial quality, but is sufficiently good to justify expectations of a first-class service by 1936. Many people in New Zealand are buying all-wave sets so that they may listen to Daventry direct, but in many cases they find the transmission marred by local electrical interference. The suppression of local man-made static affecting short-wave is out of the question on the score of cost. This also applies to the elimination of international morse interference.

The solution appears to be for the New Zealand Broadcasting Board to

erect in selected localities in the four centres directional spaced aerial systems using several receivers and mixing or fading the output as required, the receivers to modulate specially erected local broadcast transmitters. Owners of broadcast receivers would then be assured of the best possible service and the total cost would probably be less than that involved in cleaning up interference on the short-wave band. Of course, if the research work now being done results in the Daventry transmitter's being able to put down a field strength in New Zealand sufficient to overcome local interference, direct reception by the listener would be logical and reasonably economical.

LAST week a friend of mine ran over the band with his all-wave set to see what the average listener could get between 7.30 and 10 p.m. At the moment there are many signs that Auckland is about to experience a short-wave vogue. To explore the possibilities of short-wave reception the listener devoted from 7.30 to 10 on every night of the week to short-wave listening. His results are summarised as follows: 16 to 25 metres, staccato morse and static; 25.5 metres, B.B.C. telephony station, speech good, music ranging from good to poor due to selective fading; 26 to 31 metres, morse stations; 31 metres, Australian short-wave telephony stations, transmissions consistently good; 31.5 metres, B.B.C. station, speech, fair, music poor and marred by morse stations; 31 to 38 metres, morse station; 39 to 85 metres, morse stations and local amateurs on telephony.

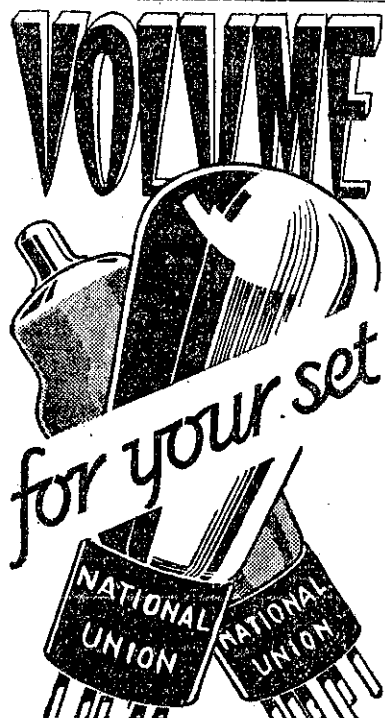
IN last week's notes reference was made to the fact that since 1YX was transferred to the new IYA building in Shortland Street, the auxiliary station's broadcast could be heard in the background of 1YA's transmission. The trouble has not yet been remedied. On Monday night of last week the special B.B.C. recorded feature "Flags on the Matterhorn," the remarkable radio play which tells in dramatic fashion the true story of the first successful attempt to climb the Matterhorn on July 14, 1865, was entirely spoilt while being broadcast from 1YA. This was due to 1YX's broadcast being plainly heard in 1YA's background. Particularly was this noticeable when yodelling was in progress. During a most dramatic moment, when listeners were imagining mountaineers creeping around in the snows of Switzerland's "white hell," the strains of bagpipes followed by light orchestral numbers could be heard in the background—coming from 1YX, of course. The local colour of the excellent drama was entirely ruined by this most inappropriate music which crept in. It is to be hoped that the technical experts succeed in eliminating this "butting in" by 1YX.

MR. HARRY THURSTON's three performances from 1YA last week have whetted the listeners' appetite, and no doubt when this famous English character comedian goes before the microphone at the other national stations during his New Zealand tour there will be many Aucklanders who will tune into him. A bright and breezy personality, this Harry Thurston; he dispensed the sort of comedy that everybody enjoys. His "Fifteen Minutes With Ol' Bill" last Tuesday kept listeners in a simmer of merriment. The artist, who, as everyone knows, was the original "Ol' Bill" of "Better 'Ole" fame, was simply a riot. The Broadcasting Board's decision to engage Mr. Thurston to tour the four YA stations was a popular one.

TRULY, Gordon Hutter, 1YA's popular sports announcer, is a versatile man. Without a peer as a racing announcer, and acknowledged as an expert and an authority on wrestling, he has given listeners excellent descriptions of all other sports such as Rugby football from Eden Park and cricket from the same ground, while a couple of weeks ago he surprised natatorial devotees by the fine manner in which he described the New Zealand swimming championships. Again on Saturday last he won fresh laurels by the full and interesting manner in which he enabled listeners to follow the New Zealand rowing championships on the Whau Estuary. Mr. Hutter used a short-wave portable transmitter erected on a launch which followed the oarsmen.

AUCKLAND'S second radio landmark—the fitting of the giant signs—the letters "IYA" to each side of the 100ft. lattice mast on the top of the new 1YA building, was completed last week. The Neon signs are to be lighted with a mercury vapour in a new shade of gold and will be visible for many miles in all directions. Each letter is 12ft. long and 4ft. wide. Of course, the other landmark referred to is the 508ft. mast alongside the transmitting station at Henderson. This is still the highest structure in Australasia. Motorists still drive out on Sundays in large numbers to inspect this mast.

MRS. B. F. RICHARDS, who is to speak from 1YA on Monday night next on "Literary Trends—Criminology in Fiction," has had a distinguished literary career. She is a daughter of the late Maurice Hewlett, the famous author. Her mother, it will be remembered, was the first aviatrix in the British Empire to gain her pilot's certificate many years ago. Mrs. Hewlett at present resides in Tauranga. Mrs. Richards for some years worked with her father in England, so it is no wonder that she is so gifted.



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